

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

About This Area

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area is in north St. Louis County at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. To reach the area, go north 2.8 miles from the I-270 Riverview Drive exit. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road.

The Conservation Department purchased this 4,318-acre area in 1997 to create an urban conservation area. The area includes a view of the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, more than 6.5 miles of river frontage, about 800 acres of bottomland forest, and a 110-acre island.

A small town once known as Columbia and later as St. Vrain, was located in this river bottom. It was shown on plat maps from the mid 1800s but was gone by 1870.

A flood protection levee protects most of this bottom from minor floods. The great flood of 1993 overtopped this levee and flooded most of the area, depositing sand and debris. The area will continue to be prone to occasional flooding.

The Conservation Department will manage Columbia Bottom to create a mosaic of bottomland habitats that will include shallow wetlands, bottomland hardwoods, prairie and cropland. These habitats will attract a wide variety of resident and migratory wildlife for the enjoyment of all our state's residents and visitors.

Public access facilities, including roads, trails, a river access and a viewing area at the confluence, were constructed in 2002. A Visitor Center and a series of Exploration Stations were completed in 2004. Habitat improvements and construction of additional facilities, including a river pump station and additional roads and trails, will continue through 2005. Portions of the area may be closed to the public as construction continues.



Things to Do

- **Fishing** - There is plenty of fishing opportunity on the banks of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. A disabled-accessible fishing pier is provided near the boat ramp.

- **Boating** - A boat ramp is provided on the Missouri River about 3 miles above its confluence with the Mississippi River.

- **Hunting** - Managed deer hunts and managed hunts for doves are offered in the fall. A waterfowl hunting program will be added when the wetlands are completed.

- **Hiking and Biking** - Walking and biking is encouraged on the 4.75-mile *Confluence Trail*. This limestone trail begins near the area entrance and ends at the confluence viewing area. Hikers can also enjoy the 3-mile *River's Edge Trail*, which winds through the woods on the bank of the Missouri River.

- **Nature Study, Birdwatching and Outdoor Photography** - There is ample opportunity to study nature, watch birds and photograph wildlife all over the area.

- **Interpretive Programs** - Naturalist- and volunteer-led programs are available for school groups, youth organizations and the general public by reservation. Topics include: aquatic studies, floodplain habitats, wildlife, outdoor skills, Lewis and Clark, and more. Contact the Visitor Center for more information or to receive our newsletter, "Making Tracks."

- **Exploration Stations** - Discover the variety of habitats at Columbia Bottom by visiting our eight Exploration Stations. Each station explores a different bottomland habitat and the wildlife that lives there. Pick up a "Passport Book" at the Visitor Center to help you explore the area.

- **Visitor Center** - Stop by the Visitor Center to learn more about Columbia Bottom and the natural wonders that can be found there.

Rules and Regulations

Area hours: Columbia Bottom Conservation Area is closed to public use from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily from April 1 to Sept. 30, and from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily from Oct. 1 to March 31; except for authorized hunting and fishing activities.

- No littering.
- No fireworks.
- No open fires.
- No free-running pets. Dogs must be leashed or confined when not being trained or used for authorized hunting.

- Bicycles are permitted only on designated trails and roads open to vehicles. Bicycles are not permitted on service roads or the *River's Edge Trail*.

- Destroying, cutting or removing vegetation is prohibited. Nuts, berries, fruits, mushrooms and wild greens may be taken only for personal consumption.

- Horses are permitted only on roads open to vehicles.

- No camping.
- Motor vehicles are restricted to roads and parking areas.
- No target shooting.

Fishing

Fishing in the rivers and sloughs is permitted under statewide regulations. The following special regulations apply to lakes ponds and wetland pools within the area.

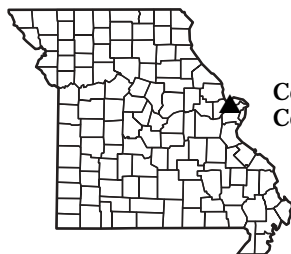
- Bullfrogs and green frogs may be taken during the statewide season only by hand, handnet, gig, or hook and line, and only on waters open to fishing.
- Seining or trapping live bait, including tadpoles, is prohibited on all impounded waters and their discharge channels.
- Salvage seining of non-game fish for personal use is permitted only with written permission of the Conservation Department.

Hunting and Trapping

- Hunting is permitted only during managed hunts or by holders of a valid daily hunting tag.
- Managed deer hunts will be conducted. Inquire at the Visitor Center for application procedures.
- Dove hunting will be permitted during a managed hunt. Inquire at the Visitor Center or the St. Louis Regional Office for application procedures.
- Waterfowl and turkey hunting are not permitted at this time except that special youth-only hunts may be conducted.
- Hunting of other wildlife is not permitted at this time.
- Trapping of furbearers is permitted only as specifically authorized by special use permit.

(Regulations are from the Wildlife Code of Missouri and selected statutes of the State of Missouri. Special area regulations are from Chapter 11 of the Wildlife Code. Free copies of the Wildlife Code and Special Area Regulations are available from the Conservation Department.)

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 18th and C Street NW, Washington D.C. 20240.



Columbia Bottom
Conservation Area

Welcome

Missouri is a state rich in history, folklore and natural resources. The Conservation Department encourages you to visit, use and enjoy this area and other Department areas.

Land surrounding Columbia Bottom Conservation Area belongs to private landowners. The boundaries adjoining private property are clearly marked. Please respect landowners' rights with these simple courtesies: obtain permission before going on private property, pick up all litter, be careful with fire, do not damage property, practice safe hunting.

Nearby Department Areas:

Bellefontaine Conservation Area
St. Stanislaus Conservation Area
Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area
Pelican Island Natural Area
Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

For local information, contact:

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area
801 Strodtman Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63138
314/877-6014

Your comments and suggestions regarding area facilities and management are welcome.

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Missouri Department of
CONSERVATION

